EPIC COMICS
Timespirits
FIRST ISSUE
TIMESPIRITS 1
OCTOBER 1984
$1.50
$1.75 CANADA
MARVEL

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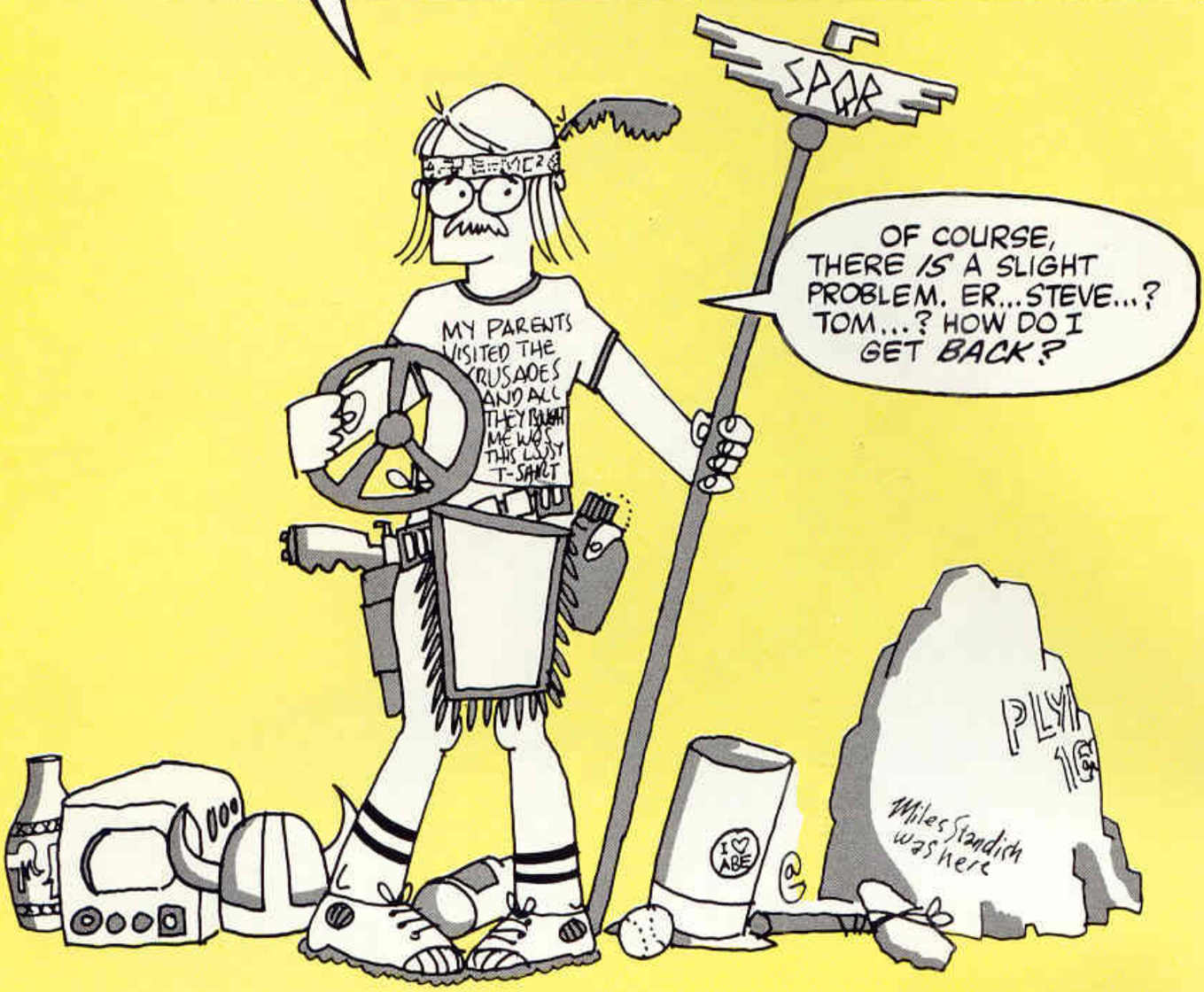
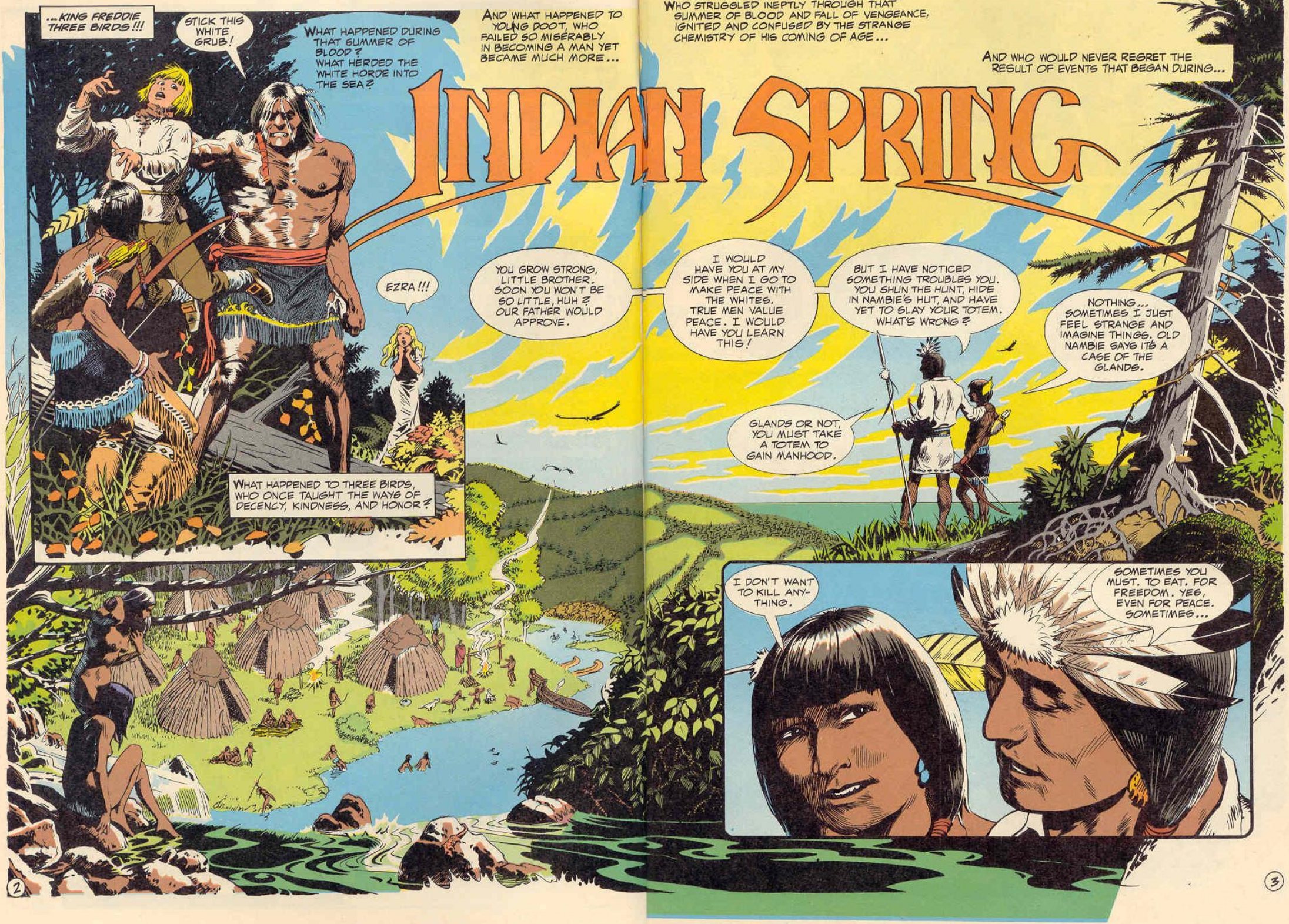
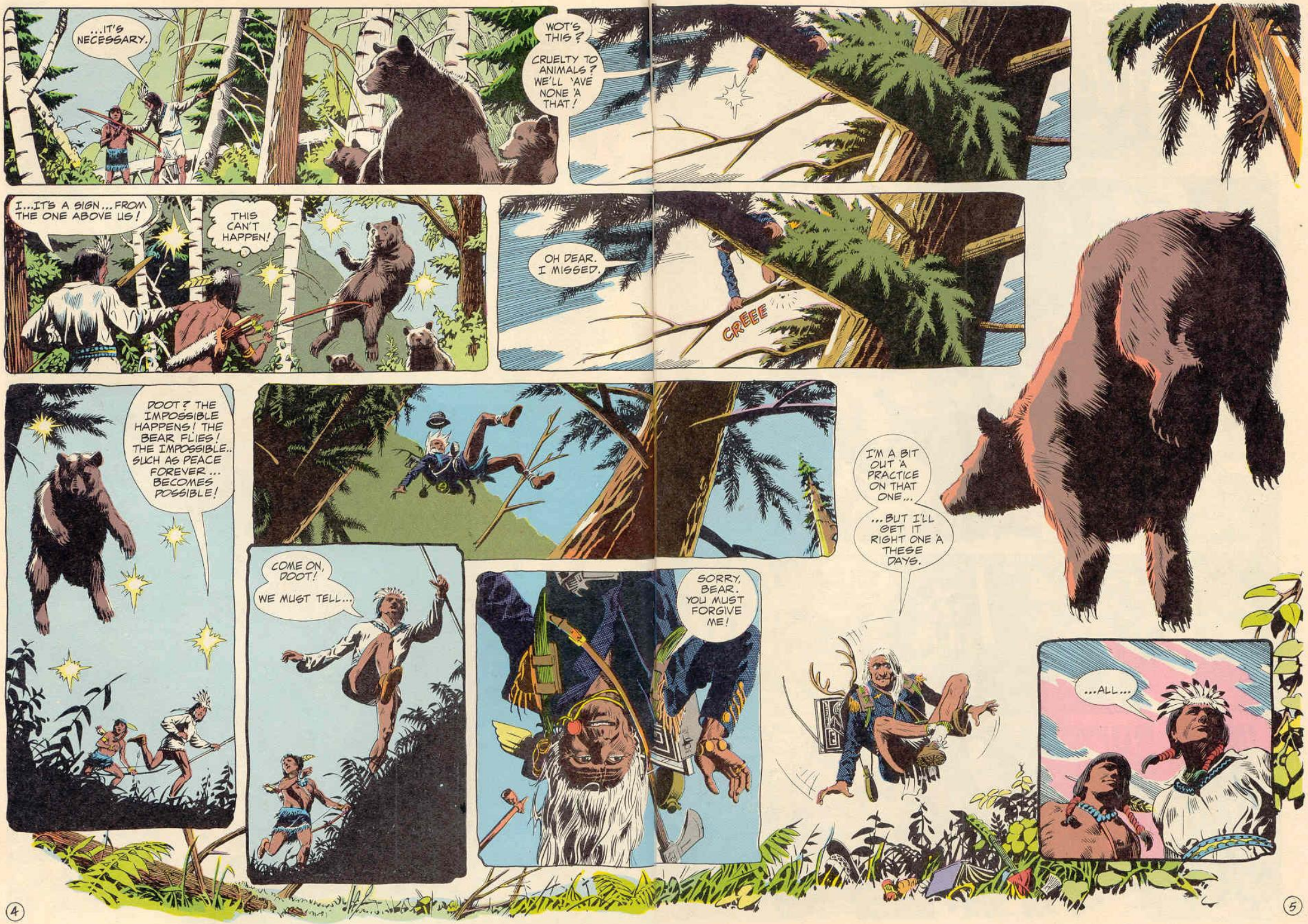
WELCOME. I'M ARCHIE GOODWIN, EDITOR OF MARVEL'S *EPIC COMICS* LINE, AND THIS IS THE FIRST ISSUE OF *TIME SPIRITS*, WHICH I FEEL IS ONE OF OUR MOST EXCITING NEW BOOKS. WHY? WELL, IT COULD BE STEVE PERRY'S UNUSUAL BLENDING OF AMERICAN INDIAN LORE, AUTHENTIC HISTORY, AND MYSTICAL FANTASY IN HIS SCRIPT, OR THE BEAUTIFUL MIXTURE OF REALISM AND ROMANTIC IMAGERY IN TOM YEATES'S ARTWORK. BUT WHAT MOST EXCITES *ME* IS THAT *TIME SPIRITS* IS ABOUT *TIME TRAVEL!* AND THAT'S GIVEN ME A CHANCE TO *REALLY* INDULGE MYSELF. JUST *LOOK* AT ALL THE NEAT STUFF I'VE BEEN ABLE TO PICK UP IN MY *OWN* TRAVELS. THE STEERING WHEEL OF A 1924 HUPMOBILE... A TEN-INCH PHILCO TV, CIRCA 1949... A JAR OF ELEPHANT LINIMENT FROM HANNIBAL'S ALPS-CROSSING...! THE POSSIBILITIES IN THIS BUSINESS ARE *ENDLESS*...!


SPQR
OF COURSE, THERE *IS* A SLIGHT PROBLEM. ER... STEVE...? TOM...? HOW DO I GET *BACK*?
MY PARENTS VISITED THE CRUSADES AND ALL THEY BOUGHT ME WAS THIS LOUSY T-SHIRT
I ♥ ABE
Miles Standish was here

TIMESPIRITS™ Vol. 1, No. 1, October, 1984. Published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, James E. Galton, President; Stan Lee, Publisher; Michael Hobson, Vice-President, Publishing; Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production. Office of Publication: 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016. Published bi-monthly. TIMESPIRITS™ (including all prominent characters featured in this issue) and the distinctive likenesses thereof are the trademarks of Steve Perry and Tom Yeates. "Epic Comics" is a trademark of the Marvel Comics Group, a division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All TIMESPIRITS™ material copyright ©1984 Steve Perry and Tom Yeates. All other material © 1984 Marvel Comics Group. All rights reserved. Price $1.50 per copy in the US and $1.75 in Canada. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons and / or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. Printed in Canada.

DOOT OF THE WAWENOC SUSPECTED THAT IN THE TIME BEFORE THE WHITE MAN, OR THEN MORE FREQUENTY THAN NOW, THE PEOPLE OF ALGONQUIAN TONGUE PRACTICED THE OLD WAYS.
THE SHAMAN WAS POWER, THE WARRIOR STRENGTH. BRAVERY WAS TO COUNT COUP. WARFARE IN THE WOODLANDS WAS A GAME OF PRESTIGE; ALL TRIBES KNEW THEIR STATION AND THE WORLD WAS SANE.
IT EVEN STAYED SANE A WHILE AFTER THE WHITE MAN ARRIVED.
BUT WHEN THE PEOPLE WERE NO LONGER NEEDED, A CAMPAIGN OF TRIBE BY TRIBE EXTERMINATION RAGED UP THE COAST. THE OLD WAYS DIED AS EASILY AS FLESH ASSAULTED BY MUSKETBALLS.
THE SPRING OF 1633 SAW THE BRITISH 5000 STRONG AND RELENTLESS IN THEIR CONQUEST OF MAINE.
BUT BY OCTOBER THE LAST 800 WHITE MEN CROWDED A STOCKADE VILLAGE CALLED FORT DEERING... HAGGARD, BEATEN MEN...
...SURROUNDED BY MASSIVE FORCES OF INDIAN GUERILLAS ALL UNITED AND ZEALOUS BENEATH THE ENORMOUS WILL OF DOOT'S OLDER BROTHER...
T. Yeates 1·84


...KING FREDDIE THREE BIRDS!!!
STICK THIS WHITE GRUB!
WHAT HAPPENED DURING THAT SUMMER OF BLOOD? WHAT HERDED THE WHITE HORDE INTO THE SEA?
AND WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUNG DOOT, WHO FAILED SO MISERABLY IN BECOMING A MAN YET BECAME MUCH MORE...
INDIAN SPRING
WHO STRUGGLED INEPTLY THROUGH THAT SUMMER OF BLOOD AND FALL OF VENGEANCE, IGNITED AND CONFUSED BY THE STRANGE CHEMISTRY OF HIS COMING OF AGE...
AND WHO WOULD NEVER REGRET THE RESULT OF EVENTS THAT BEGAN DURING...
EZRA!!!
YOU GROW STRONG, LITTLE BROTHER. SOON YOU WON'T BE SO LITTLE, HUH? OUR FATHER WOULD APPROVE.
I WOULD HAVE YOU AT MY SIDE WHEN I GO TO MAKE PEACE WITH THE WHITES. TRUE MEN VALUE PEACE. I WOULD HAVE YOU LEARN THIS!
BUT I HAVE NOTICED SOMETHING TROUBLES YOU. YOU SHUN THE HUNT, HIDE IN NAMBIE'S HUT, AND HAVE YET TO SLAY YOUR TOTEM. WHAT'S WRONG?
NOTHING... SOMETIMES I JUST FEEL STRANGE AND IMAGINE THINGS. OLD NAMBIE SAYS IT'S A CASE OF THE GLANDS.
GLANDS OR NOT, YOU MUST TAKE A TOTEM TO GAIN MANHOOD.
WHAT HAPPENED TO THREE BIRDS, WHO ONCE TAUGHT THE WAYS OF DECENCY, KINDNESS, AND HONOR?
I DON'T WANT TO KILL ANYTHING.
SOMETIMES YOU MUST. TO EAT. FOR FREEDOM. YES, EVEN FOR PEACE. SOMETIMES...


...IT'S NECESSARY.
WOT'S THIS?
CRUELTY TO ANIMALS? WE'LL 'AVE NONE 'A THAT!
I...IT'S A SIGN... FROM THE ONE ABOVE US!
THIS CAN'T HAPPEN!
OH DEAR. I MISSED.
CREEE
DOOT? THE IMPOSSIBLE HAPPENS! THE BEAR FLIES! THE IMPOSSIBLE.. SUCH AS PEACE FOREVER... BECOMES POSSIBLE!
COME ON, DOOT!
WE MUST TELL...
SORRY, BEAR. YOU MUST FORGIVE ME!
I'M A BIT OUT 'A PRACTICE ON THAT ONE...
...BUT I'LL GET IT RIGHT ONE 'A THESE DAYS.
...ALL...

...THE PEOPLE...
KRAK! POP! POPPOPOP!
...THE PEOPLE...
THERE HE IS! IT'S KING FREDDIE!
GET HIM!
SPLIT UP, LITTLE BROTHER!
MEET ME AT THE SACRED MOUNDS BY THE SEA!
BE SWIFT!

HALF AN HOUR'S HARD RUN LATER...
BEOOW
THEY SAID THEY WANTED PEACE..BUT NO! ON AND ON THEY SLAUGHTER AND TAKE WHAT THEY WANT! NEIGHBORS BLINDLY TRUST IN PROMISED SAFETY AND LIFT NO SPEARS!
WELL ENOUGH!
ANCESTORS! HEAR ME! FEEL THE PAIN! THEY MURDER THE OLD WAYS! IS VENGEANCE NOT JUSTIFIED?
I'LL GIVE ANYTHING...
...PAY ANY PRICE...
...AGREE TO ANY TERMS...
SHOW ME! SHOW ME THE WAY. HOW MAY I RID THE WORLD OF THESE WHITE LIARS!
'EAR...'EAR... LET'S 'AVE A NICE SALUTE FOR OLE KING FREDDIE!
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POW!
BAM!
POW!
POW!
POP!
POP!
POP!

QUITE A TRICK ONCE YOU GET IT RIGHT, AYE WOT?
NOW... WHAT'S THIS I HEAR ABOUT PAYING ANY PRICE?
ARE YOU A DEVIL?
I BEG YOUR PARDON! I'M A TEACHER.
I KNOW MORE ABOUT EVERY THING THAN ANYONE! AND ALL I KNOW IS FOR SALE!
IF YOU'LL PAY ANY PRICE... I'VE GOT YOUR ANSWER.
IN FACT, I'VE GOT IT RIGHT HERE... AND YOU HAVEN'T EVEN ASKED YET.
RATHER GLAD TO BE RID OF IT, TOO! IT'S NOT VERY PLEASANT AND IT'S VERY EXPENSIVE.
YOUR ONLY HOPE, KING FREDDIE...
...IS THE BLOODLESS GHEEBE!

ELSEWHEN, DOOT WAS SWIFT... AS THE DEER. SILENT AS THE FOX. SLEEK AND BEAUTIFUL AS HE SLICED THROUGH THE FOREST.
SURELY NO WHITE MAN COULD MATCH HIM...
...WHEN HE ENTERED THAT VACANT SPOT OF THE RUNNER...
... WHERE ALL THAT EXISTS CLANGS IN THE HEART...
BELLOWS THE LUNGS...
...AND CHARGES THE BODY WITH THE CRISP SENSE OF SPRING AND YOUTH.
AND IN THIS LONE-LINESS OF FLIGHT IT SUDDENLY OCCURRED TO DOOT WHY HE RUNS.
THE THOUGHT IS A WALL. HIS IMPACT WITH IT STOPS HIM DEAD.
HIS PEOPLE. ALL HIS PEOPLE... MASSACRED...
POW!
SHOW OFF!
SHUT YER YAP AND GIT AFTER HIM!

OVER HERE, MY DEAR CHAP!
QUICKLY NOW... THEY'RE ALMOST HERE...
NOW WE LOST 'EM! HADDA SHOW OFF, DIDN'T YA?
DIDN'T LOSE HIM!
WHITE MEN SEE WITH THE EYE! PEOPLE SEE WITH SPIRIT!
RATHER DANGEROUS PART OF THE WORLD.
SHOULDN'T WE...
REALLY QUITE SIMPLE, YOUNG PERSON...
MOST SACRED GROUNDS CONTAIN AN EXTRA MOUND-- WE CALL THEM POINTS OF POWER.
LOST THE 20 CROWN SCALP BOUNTY, TOO!
DID NOT! DID NOT!
DAN'L CROCKER DON'T NEVER LOSE NO INJUN! I'LL GIT THAT PUP! MARK MY WORDS!
I SUPPOSE IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH LONGITUDE AND LATITUDE AND MAGNETIC POLES AND SUCH THINGS...
...BUT WE MEN OF KNOWLEDGE SIMPLY CALL THEM POINTS OF POWER.

THEY'RE ALL OVER THE PLACE. PANDIMENSIONAL RIFFS, DON'T YOU KNOW.
NO... OF COURSE YOU DON'T.
SORRY.
I SOMETIMES FORGET WHERE I AM.
I SOMETIMES FORGET WHO I AM!
I'M A LOT OLDER THAN I LOOK, YOU KNOW. CAN'T STOP AGE... BUT YOU CAN SLOW IT DOWN!
WHY, I REMEMBER SOME SPANISH CHAP BUMBLING ABOUT THE GREAT SWAMPS LOOKING FOR A FOUNTAIN, OF ALL THINGS.
HE THOUGHT YOU COULD STOP IT.
CRAZY BUNCH OF CHAPS, THESE WHITE MEN...
W... WHO ARE YOU?
GOOD QUESTION! DIDN'T I TELL YOU?
CUSICK! CUSICK THE TUSCARORA!
AN 'UMBLE MAN OF KNOWLEDGE..
A SPIRIT OF TIME AND SPACE!
SCHOOLED AT ALL THE GREAT INSTITUTIONS OF LIFE AND ACADEMIA, FROM ROME TO THE PUEBLOS, FROM OXFORD TO TENOCHTITLAN, FROM BOSTON TO PEKING! BEYOND THAT, TOO.
I TRAVEL THE WORLD SEEKING WHAT I DO NOT KNOW.
I SELL WHAT I DO KNOW.
THAT WOULD BE THREE BIRDS, CHIEF OF THE WAWENOC, CALLED KING FREDDIE BY THE BRITISH.
DO YOU KNOW MY BROTHER?
YES! YES... WHERE IS HE?
NASTY HABIT THESE WHITE MEN HAVE, RENAMING ALL THE CHIEFS THAT WAY.
LISTEN. YOUR BROTHER WAS VERY DETERMINED. HE PAID THE PRICE. I GAVE HIM THE KNOWLEDGE.
I'M A RATHER BLOODY MERCENARY ON THAT ACCOUNT. SO DON'T BLAME ME.
WHAT DID YOU DO?

DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT... IT'S THE STANDARD PRICE. BEEN SO FOR EONS, I DARE SAY.
YOUR BROTHER WANTED POWER... POWER ONLY THE BLOODLESS GHEEBE COULD GIVE.
AND IT WILL GIVE HIM WHATEVER HE WANTS, BUT IT WILL ALSO CONSUME HIM, AND ALL THOSE AROUND HIM, DOING SO.
YOU WANT NO PART OF THIS, DOOT.
I MUST SAVE HIM...
YOU CANNOT. EVEN TO STOP HIM WOULD COST YOUR SOUL.
MY WHAT?
YOUR SPIRIT, YOUNG PERSON.
YOUR VERY SPIRIT.
YOU GIBBER LIKE AN OLD SOW AND TELL ME NOTHING!
WHERE IS THREE BIRDS!
NOW!!!
BUT THEN I MUST BE ON! I'VE QUITE A JOURNEY.
I LIKE YOU.
SO I'LL TELL YOU AND I WON'T EVEN CHARGE YOU.
YOU SEE, I LEARNED OF AN AROOSTIC WHO CAN KILL FLIES WITH INVISIBLE TENTACLES ENEMATING FROM HIS STOMACH.
BLOODY USEFUL, DON'T YOU THINK, ESPECIALLY DURING THE SUMMER?
PLEASE... WHERE IS MY BROTHER?
WHY, DIDN'T I TELL YOU? HE'S RIGHT AROUND THE MOUND.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
LITTLE BROTHER! YOU ARE SO PURE... I NEVER KNEW. BUT NOW I SEE ... I SEE ALL! THE BLOODLESS ONE SHOWS ME! I AM JUSTICE! I AM VENGEANCE!
YOU ARE FOR ME OR AGAINST ME!
W...WHY, I LOVE YOU, BROTHER...
GOOD! GOOD!
FOLLOW ME, THEN. THERE IS MUCH TO DO.

AND MUCH WAS DONE.
VICTORY MOUNTED VICTORY AS ALL THE TRIBES OF THE WORLD UNITED UNDER KING FREDDIE'S RAGE.
GONE WAS THE WAR OF SKIRMISHES, THE BATTLE OF HONOR. SAVAGERY AND TORTURE FLAMED UP THE SUMMER OF BLOOD, BLACKENING THE FALL OF VENGEANCE...
AND IT WAS IN THOSE TIMES...
...AS THE SCALPS OF WOMEN AND INFANTS PILED UP HIGHER THAN HIS HUT...
...AS HIS HEAD CHURNED WITH VISIONS OF LIVES LOST, LIVES THE DEAD MIGHT HAVE LED AND ONES HE HIMSELF MIGHT YET LEAD.
...UNTIL IT SEEMED THAT TIME ITSELF CONSPIRED TO CONFUSE HIM AND KEEP HIM FROM EVER BECOMING A MAN...
IT WAS IN THESE TIMES THAT DOOT FELT HIS BROTHER SLIP AWAY...HIS DIGNITY FAILED HIM...
...HIS VERY HEART DRAIN OF LIFE AS ALL OF LIFE BECOMES THE DEALING OF DEATH...
IT WAS A QUESTION OF RIGHT AND WRONG, OF LOVE AND HATE. DOES NOT RETRIBUTION EVER BECOME COMPLETE?
IS THERE NO LIMIT TO JUSTICE?

STICK HIM, I SAY! BAH!
YOU KILL NO ONE ALL YEAR. BUT I... I BREAK THE SPINE OF ALL WHITE SCUM...
SNAP
NO... NO... EZRA...
...AS I DRIVE THEM FROM MY LAND!
HAVE YOU LOST YOUR HEART, THREE BIRDS?
MUST EVERYONE DIE?
THREE BIRDS IS DEAD! ONLY I REMAIN! I AM POWER! TONIGHT I CRUSH DEERING! TONIGHT I RID THE LAND OF WHITE MEN!
YOU GO TOO FAR...
I GO FURTHER! AND YOU WILL HELP!
BRING ME HER SCALP AND I FORGIVE YOU.
REFUSE ME AGAIN AND I KILL YOU WHERE YOU STAND.
YOU WOULD, WOULDN'T YOU.
WHAT IS HAPPENING TO US...?

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME!?

E...EZRA?
ALIVE.
THANK YOU... THANK YOU SO MUCH...
I'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER...
THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO SAVE MY BROTHER NOW.

THE RUINS OF FORT DEERING BLAZE IN THE CHILL, OCTOBER NIGHT. RIOTOUS INDIANS DANCE, EYES VACANT AND ROLLING, DRUNK ON BLOOD AND VICTORY.
ALL THE WHITE MEN IN MAINE ARE DEAD, OR SOON THAT WAY...

YET AS DOOT SHOULDERS HIS WAY THROUGH THE COONING THRONGS HE FLINCHES AT THE SUDDEN FEELING...
...THAT THINGS HAVE HARDLY BEGUN!
GOOD! HER SCALP STILL GROWS! VERY GOOD!

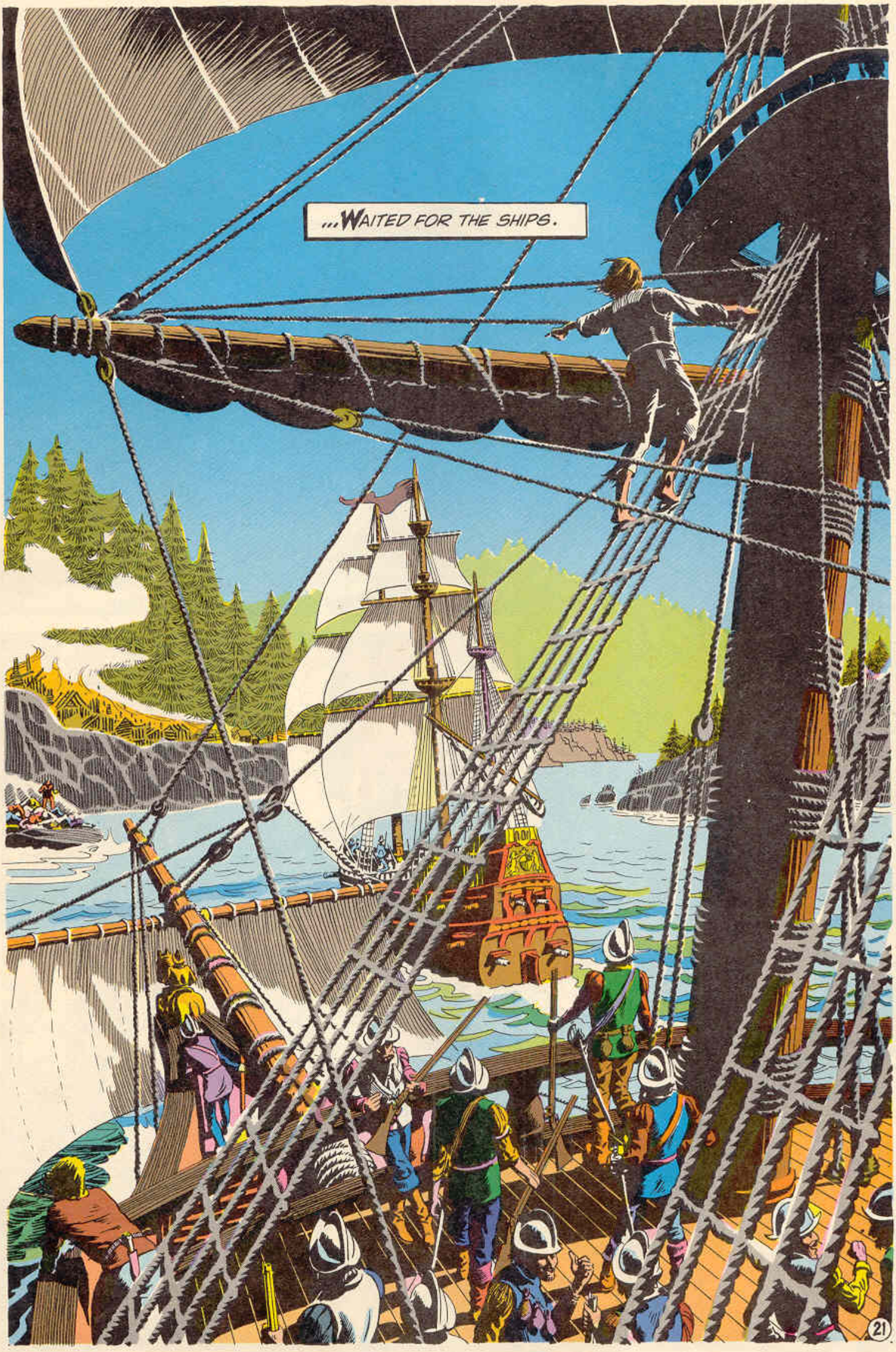
YOU'RE SO PREDICTABLE!
THE GIRL BRINGS WORD TO BOSTON MEN. THEY SEND SHIPS! THE BLOODLESS ONE SHOWS ME THE POWER OF SHIPS!
AND YOU... LITTLE BROTHER... DELIVER THEM TO ME!

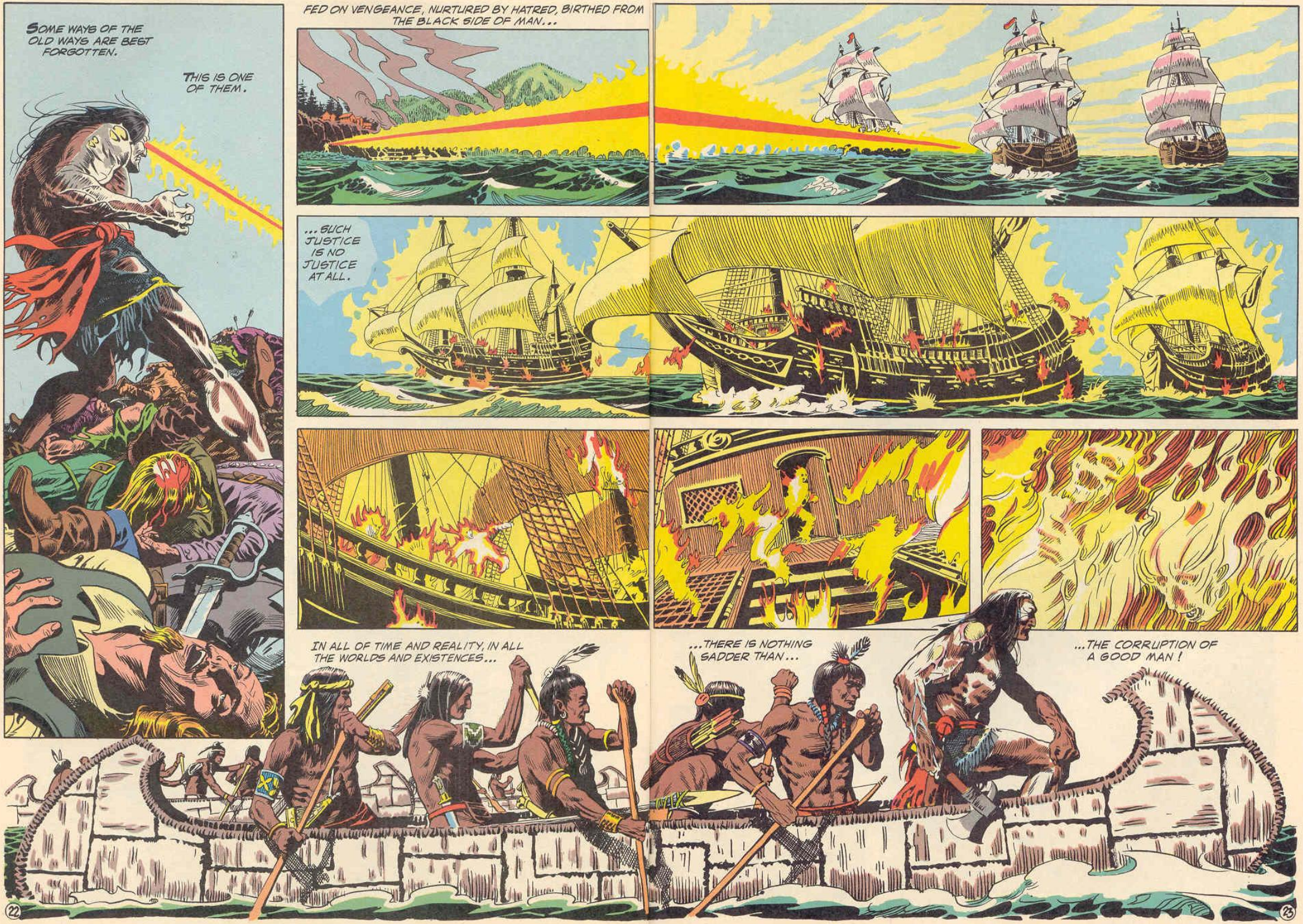
DO IT! DO IT!

HOW I HATE YOU.

HOW I USE YOU!
SHIPS ARE THE FINAL SOLUTION!
...ANNIHILATION...
ANNIHILATION OF ALL WHITE MEN EVERYWHERE!
ARRRRGGHHM... NO DAMN PUP EVER ESCAPES...
GIT 'EM, DAN'L.
...DAN'L
CROCKARRRGGGHHHH!

EXPECTING DEATH, DOOT RECEIVES SOMETHING FAR MORE PAINFUL.
FOR THE BRIEFEST MOMENT...
SAVE YOURSELF...
...THREE BIRDS HAD RE-TURNED.
HE RAN AND RAN, BUT HE WAS NOT RUNNING AWAY. HE RAN AND RAN FOR DAYS AND NIGHTS...
...RAN SEEKING HELP UNTIL HIS HEART CAVED IN AND HIS LIMBS DRIED OUT...
UNTIL HE DROPPED...
...AND SLEPT...
...AND SAW IN HIS DREAMS...
...HOW KING FREDDIE PILED THE DEAD ON THE BEACH AND WAITED...
...WAITED...


...WAITED FOR THE SHIPS.


SOME WAYS OF THE OLD WAYS ARE BEST FORGOTTEN.
THIS IS ONE OF THEM.
FED ON VENGEANCE, NURTURED BY HATRED, BIRTHED FROM THE BLACK SIDE OF MAN...
...SUCH JUSTICE IS NO JUSTICE AT ALL.
IN ALL OF TIME AND REALITY, IN ALL THE WORLDS AND EXISTENCES...
...THERE IS NOTHING SADDER THAN...
...THE CORRUPTION OF A GOOD MAN!

ALL MUST DIE! ALL WHITE MEN EVERYWHERE! THE BLOODLESS ONE DIRECTS US!
WITH THESE SHIPS WE BRING DEATH CITIES!
WE SAIL, MY WARRIORS, TO CUT THE VERY HEART FROM THE WHITE HORDE!
WE SAIL TO KILL THE GREAT CHIEF!
WE SAIL TO INVADE ENGLAND!
HE MIGHT HAVE SLEPT HOURS; PERHAPS DAYS. DOOT COULDN'T TELL. TIME MEANT SO LITTLE ANYMORE.
WELL I'M BLOODY IMPRESSED! YOU'VE QUITE THE SPIRIT IN YOU. LUCKY, TOO.
IF THOSE POOR BLIGHTERS UNDER KING FREDDIE'S INFLUENCE KNEW A JIB FROM A MIZZENMAST THEY'D BE HALF WAY THROUGH KING CHARLES' LIVER BY NOW.
RATHER BETTER TO HAVE ATTACKED BOSTON, DON'T YOU THINK?
SHOW ME HOW TO SAVE HIM.
YOU CANNOT.
YOU MIGHT, HOWEVER, YET STOP HIM.
YOU KNOW THE PRICE.

I WILL PAY... MY SOUL, YOU CALLED IT.
I WILL PAY THAT, AND I WILL SAVE THREE BIRDS, TOO!
I LIKE YOU, DOOT. FELT A BIT 'A THE OLD COMRADLY DELIGHT FIRST TIME I SAW YOU HESITATE SHOOTING THE BEAR.
SOMETHING SPECIAL'S BREWING IN YOU. SOMETHING I'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE.
I FIGURED YOU'D BLOOM DURING THE SUMMER, BUT YOUR BROTHER SUPPRESSED YOU QUITE HANDILY. TOO BAD IT'S COME TO THIS.
THIS IS ONE SALE I'D PREFER NOT TO MAKE. BUT I SIMPLY CAN'T PASS IT UP.
YOU'D NEVER BELIEVE THE USES ONE HAS FOR A STRONG, FRESH SOUL!
NOTHING PERSONAL! I HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND!
WELL ... I SUPPOSE WE'RE ON WITH IT. REALLY QUITE SIMPLE.
SPIRITS ARE BOUND TO THE BODY BY A SHELL OF REALITY WE CREATE FOR OURSELVES! TO FREE THE SPIRIT, ONE MUST CRACK THE SHELL.
BUT IT'S QUITE TOUGH AND MUST BE SOFTENED BY THE PROPER MINISTRATIONS...
THEN YOU MUST PLEDGE YOUR SPIRIT TO THE SHELL OF THE BIG TURTLE--THAT'S THIS--AND TO CUSICK THE TUSCARORA--THAT'S ME.
ONCE DONE, YOU MUST RENOUNCE THE SHELL OF YOUR MORTAL FORM, NEVER AGAIN TO REGAIN IT!
NOW I WILL SHOW YOU HOW... AS SOON AS I FIND THAT BLASTED OINTMENT.
I PLEDGE MY...
NO, NO... NOT YET. IT WON'T WORK...
...WITHOUT THE OINTMENT...

DOOT OF THE WAWENOC FINALLY COMES OF AGE...
...AN ELEMENTAL RELEASE OF SUCH PASSION AND CHANGE...
...THAT NATURE STARTS TO SHAKE ITSELF APART...
...AND TIME ITSELF FLIPS...
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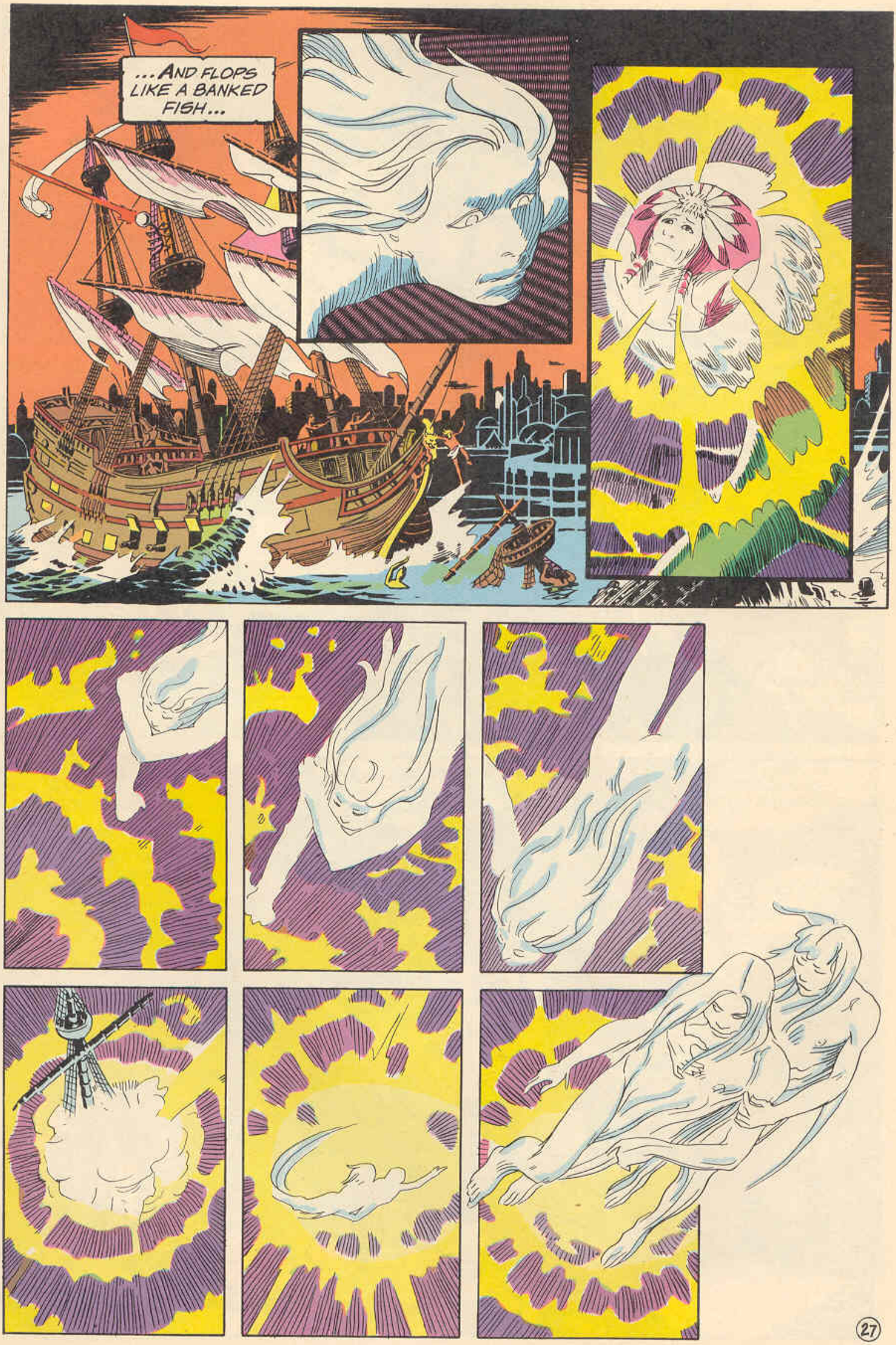
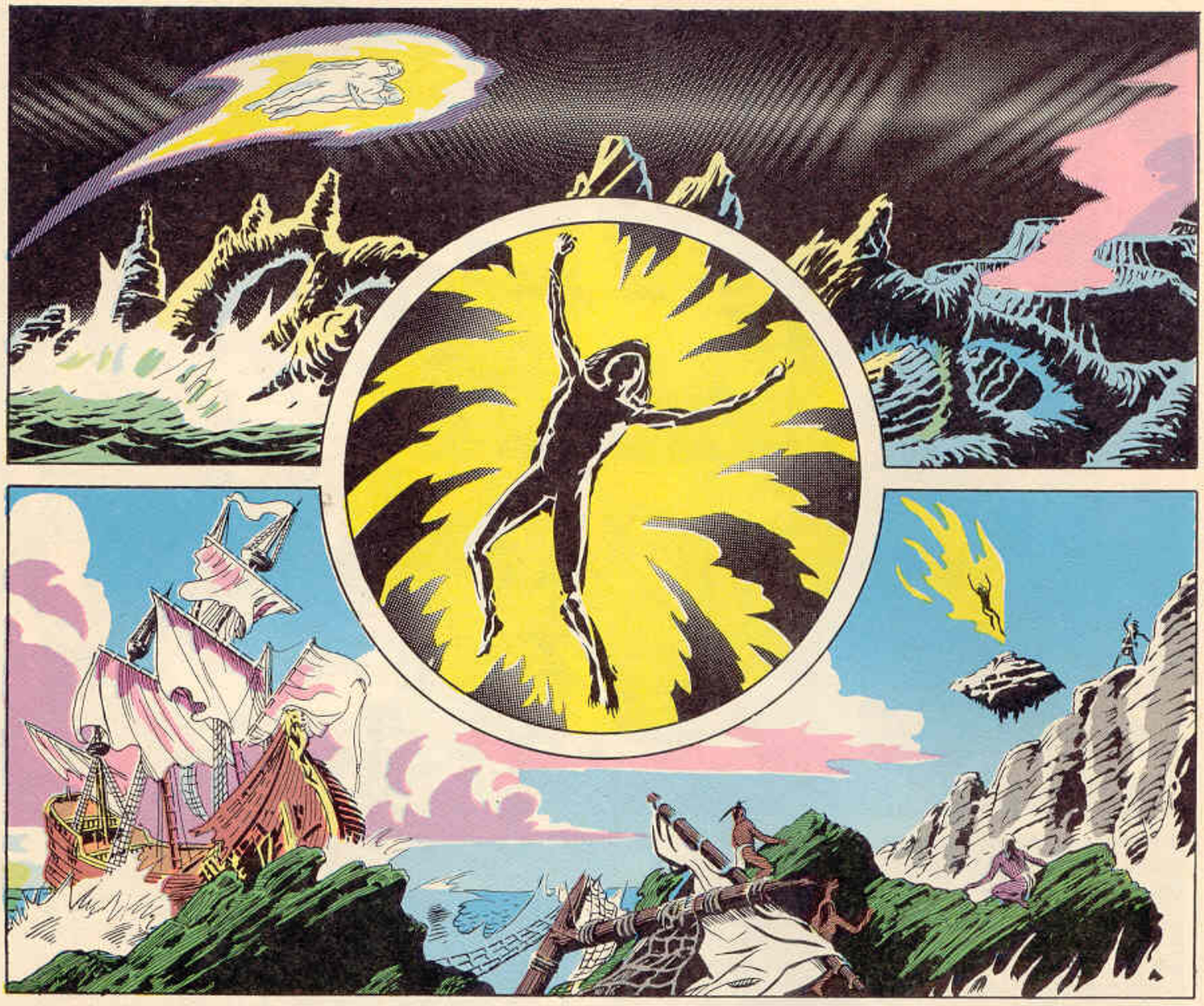
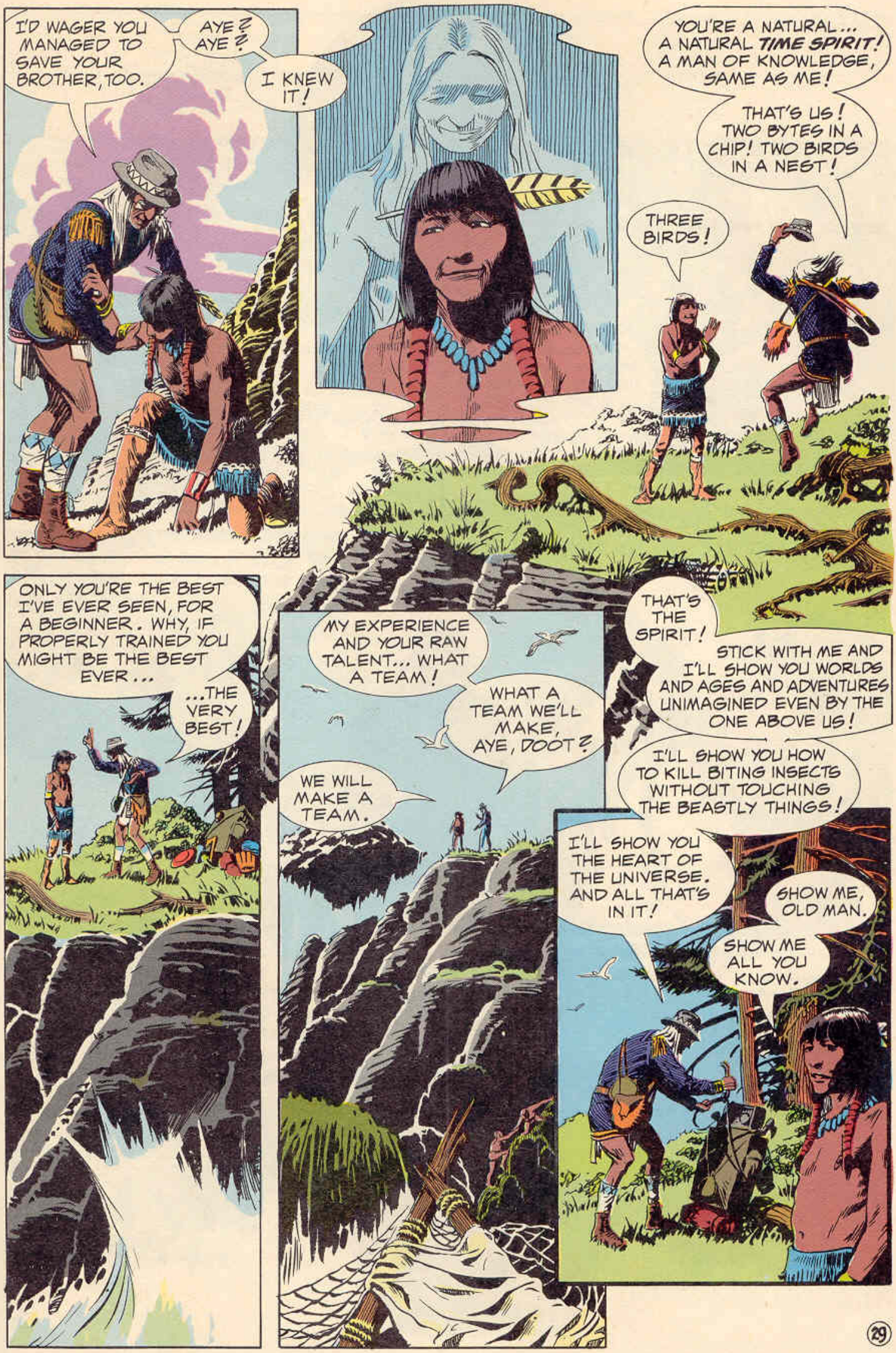

...AND FLOPS LIKE A BANKED FISH...



I'D NEVER BELIEVE IT... YOU DID THAT YOURSELF!
WHY, I'VE BEEN TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH THAT TRICK FOR NEARLY TWO CENTURIES!
AND YOU DID IT YOURSELF!


I'D WAGER YOU MANAGED TO SAVE YOUR BROTHER, TOO.
AYE? AYE?
I KNEW IT!
YOU'RE A NATURAL... A NATURAL TIME SPIRIT! A MAN OF KNOWLEDGE, SAME AS ME!
THAT'S US! TWO BYTES IN A CHIP! TWO BIRDS IN A NEST!
THREE BIRDS!
THAT'S THE SPIRIT!
STICK WITH ME AND I'LL SHOW YOU WORLDS AND AGES AND ADVENTURES UNIMAGINED EVEN BY THE ONE ABOVE US!
I'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO KILL BITING INSECTS WITHOUT TOUCHING THE BEASTLY THINGS!
I'LL SHOW YOU THE HEART OF THE UNIVERSE. AND ALL THAT'S IN IT!
SHOW ME, OLD MAN.
SHOW ME ALL YOU KNOW.
ONLY YOU'RE THE BEST I'VE EVER SEEN, FOR A BEGINNER. WHY, IF PROPERLY TRAINED YOU MIGHT BE THE BEST EVER...
...THE VERY BEST!
MY EXPERIENCE AND YOUR RAW TALENT... WHAT A TEAM!
WHAT A TEAM WE'LL MAKE, AYE, DOOT?
WE WILL MAKE A TEAM.

ALL I KNOW? OKAY!
WE CAN START WITH A GOOD, STIFF DRINK!
TOOK ME TWO HUNDRED YEARS TO FIND THIS RECIPE, AND 20 MORE TO LEARN HOW TO KEEP IT DOWN!
THINK YOU COULD STOMACH IT? IT'S RATHER VILE.
WHY DRINK IT?
FOR CONTROL.
WHAT'S A SHIP WITHOUT A RUDDER?
WHAT'S A TIME SPIRIT WITHOUT HIS DRINK?
BLOODY LOST!
HOW'S IT FEEL? STAYING DOWN?
FINE.
...GGGAAWKKK... GHASTLY!
WELL?

You Were Expecting Maybe Aztec Who?

Thank you for picking up **Timespirits #1**. If you're reading this page you've probably read "Indian Spring," the story of how Cusick and Doot meet. Unless, of course you're like me — I often haunt comic shops and have a habit of opening right to text pages, standing there reading them while clerks eye me oddly. With over 200 comics on the stands to choose from, one has to check things out. By picking **Timespirits** you've shown you're willing to be surprised. I think you'll like the surprises in store for you in this and the upcoming chronicles of Cusick the Tuscarora and Doot of the Wawenoc. I know it won't be what you expect.

Now I must confess something.

Archie Goodwin doesn't know this, and he's the Editor of the entire **Epic Comics** line; Laurie Sutton doesn't, and she's **Timespirits'** Associate Editor. **Marvel Comics'** Editor-in-Chief Jim Shooter doesn't, either. Neither does Michael Hobson, **Marvel's** V.P. in charge of Publishing. Or the entire **Epic Comics** staff, Margaret Clark, Arlene Puentes; our letterer Gaspar Saladino; Cara Sherman, who penciled pages 6-12, &24; or Cat Yronwode and Sam Parsins, who colored much of this first issue; or the printers and the distributors and the dealers who've made it available to you . . .

. . . Not a single one of the hundreds of wonderful people involved with **Timespirits** . . .

. . . Not a one of 'em knows what I'm about to tell you.

Not even my co-creator, Tom Yeates, knows.

What no one knows is that in the year 1817, in the then small town of Lewiston, Maine, a printing shop by the name of the Wheeler Press (and we know this from existing accountant's ledgers) published several hundred copies of *"AN ILLUSTRATED PHAMPLET OF KNOWLEDGE"* by Cusick the Tuscarora. Cusick and the print run disappeared under mysterious circumstances shortly thereafter. 158 years later, in 1975, I was fresh out of college and had the occasion to stop over at an ancient Colonial home outside of Lewiston before continuing on to Cundy's Harbour, where I lived at the time. My friends were just starting to renovate the old house. I helped them knock out a wall. And that is how I found Cusick's Phamplet of Knowledge.

Yes, I have the only known copy. I have it right here.

Anyway, five years later, in 1980, the strange cuniform writing in the Phamplet was decoded as being a sub-script of the ancient Ogam language found on stone mounds across New England.

By 1982 I had transcribed the first entry of the Phamplet into a loose 16 page story that Archie Goodwin bought for **Epic Illustrated**. But when I looked at the Phamplet again it had changed, mutated . . . There was a Tom Yeates drawing inside it. The 16 page "Indian Spring" was now 30 pages, and the launching point for a series of adventures that chronicled Cusick and Doot's development as Timespirits.

So that's the secret. Everyone thinks I am the writer / creator of **Timespirits**. But all I do is copy each issue out of Cusick's *"ILLUSTRATED PHAMPLET OF KNOWLEDGE"*. And every time I look inside it I see ever finer artwork and story, building upon itself, always changing, always moving . . .

. . . Like Time itself.

Stephen Perry
Green River
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